



Sunday, September 9, 1917

This department is engaged in separating the sheep of advertising, and of the service which backs up advertising, from the goats—and hanging a bell on the goats. It invites letters describing experiences—pleasant or unpleasant—with advertisers, whether they be manufacturers, wholesale houses, retail stores or public service corporations. It will print those letters which seem to show most typically how an advertiser's deeds square with the words of his advertising. Only signed letters, giving the writer's address, will be read. But the name will be printed or withheld, as preferred. Address: The Ad-Visor, The Tribune, New York.

I HAVE read with great interest your article in The Tribune of August 12th, headed "St. Louis Flew False Colors in Advertising." I was especially interested in looking over the advertising in The Tribune that carried your article. My eye was attracted by the copy of one merchant who advertised suits, gowns, wraps, dresses, etc., at "formerly" such and such a price and the new price, which shows a very marked reduction. The same sort of comparative prices are also contained in the advertisements of two other department stores in which are a number of "former" prices and present prices. It appeared to me that it might be well for you to take a look at The Tribune itself. This is simply a suggestion, as the advertisements may be a hundred per cent pure gold.

F. L. CRAFT, Advertising Manager The St. Louis Star.

We are very glad to have this letter as the basis of a statement of just where we stand on comparative price advertising.

In the first place, the use of comparative prices does not necessarily involve questions of absolute honesty or dishonesty as does the use of untruthful or deliberately misleading statements. We are convinced that comparisons of this kind are unprofitable, first because they are difficult to prove, second because they may be misleading without being intentionally deceptive, and third because they are open to easy abuse in the hands of the unscrupulous.

So far as the appearance of this advertising in The Tribune is concerned, we have made it a practice to watch carefully all comparative statements for accuracy. We have also tried to avoid the word "values," requesting advertisers to compare only actual selling prices. Furthermore, when we published comparative prices, we are confident that the former prices mentioned are quoted in good faith, though of course it is impossible to make the actual investigation in each case. Our confidence in the literal truthfulness of the advertising is based upon the reputation of the merchant in question and upon our previous experience with his methods and with his advertising.

The shop to which Mr. Craft's letter refers, for example, caters to a high class trade and carries a large stock in which are many extreme styles. This shop may sell a suit for \$150 at the beginning of the season and cut it to \$50 at the end because the style does not warrant carrying it over to another year.

It would be false to say that this garment of a passing style has the same value in the early spring that it had in the fall; but it is true, on the other hand, that its selling price has been actually reduced to the degree mentioned in the advertisement. Therefore the advertiser may say: "Price \$50; former selling price \$150"; but he may not say: "Price \$50; worth \$150." If it sells for \$50, it is worth \$50; the depreciation in price represents a corresponding depreciation in value. That is why comparative advertising is likely to be misleading, even though technically true; it confuses VALUES and PRICES by inference if not by actual statement.

Besides this emphasis upon the use of comparative prices rather than values, The Tribune's readers with its money-back guarantee. If dissatisfaction results from this or any other cause, the purchaser can get his money back. The reputable merchant is anxious to refund on just claims. If he does not think that he should refund, The Tribune is ready and willing to carry its voluntarily assumed burden of protecting the merchant from an unjust claim and to cover the customer's dissatisfaction where there is an honest difference of opinion.

To sum up: The Tribune does accept advertising that may be fairly criticized as falling short of perfection. But to publish under a money-back guarantee an advertisement that quotes relative prices is widely different, both actually and morally, from the general acceptance of comparative price and comparative value advertising without investigation of the facts and without in any way protecting the reader. The liability of the purchaser's suffering a loss through possible misrepresentation in comparative price advertising in The Tribune is covered by its refund policy.

This is a point on which an educational campaign seems in order rather than the arbitrary exclusion from advertising columns of all comparative prices, the truth of which is open to discussion. The actual amount of time spent by a reader on an advertisement is brief at best. If he employs even half of that time to speculate on the accuracy of the comparative prices given, he is taking just that much attention from a direct contemplation of the excellence and special merits of the article itself. Some day merchants will realize that in publishing such prices they are paying for publicity that arouses suspicion instead of creating confidence.

VAR-NE-SIS claims to cure rheumatism with a preparation consisting essentially of alcohol, a laxative and a dash of red pepper. The tectotaler who refuses her containing about 4 per cent of alcohol and then takes Var-ne-sis, containing over three times as much, is a bit of a paradox, even though he persuades himself that he's taking it for his rheumatism and not for his "kick."

The advertising of this nostrum reeks with testimonials which are decorated profusely with realistic photographs. One picture shows a wheel chair and a pair of crutches. This is not a rebuke, as one might think at first glance, but an argument to prove that Var-ne-sis cured the lady who used to employ these artificial means of locomotion. Beautiful logic, isn't it? It's like getting a pair of moccasins, a feather headband and a tomahawk from a customer and having them photographed to prove that one is a civilized Indian.

"Had rheumatism since four years old; now enjoys ice skating," is the caption of another picture. Much as all honest folk hate pains, it is impossible to resist the temptation of getting at the idea of a Var-ne-sis imbiber with a skate on. The skate happens to be of the legitimate steel variety, but so is the alcohol in Var-ne-sis of the legitimate befooling variety.

In the Ad-Visor's infancy the following paragraph appeared in the column dated July 22, 1915:

Inquiry: Can you give me any opinion and information as to the preparation Var-ne-sis mentioned in the enclosed pamphlet?

Answer: I can. Var-ne-sis is a flagrant fraud.

We have grown in many ways since then, but our opinion of Var-ne-sis remains unchanged.

IF ALL customers' claims were just claims, it would be far easier to preach to merchants the gospel of a liberal adjustment policy. Miss I. R. sent us copies of her correspondence with the New York Waist House, among which was this letter addressed to the company:

I beg to call your attention to the fact that I bought a pongee waist with a printed collar and cuffs at your 125th Street store a few weeks ago. After washing same, the waist began to shrink. I returned with the waist to above mentioned store. The manager of same informed me that dyed waists are not guaranteed. Now please understand me, I made no complaint about the printed material. It was the quality of the pongee, and I know, as well as you, that pongee is not dyed. From the above you can see that I feel justified in requesting that you replace said waist by a new one.

I. R.

Our investigation of this case disclosed the fact that practically no shop can guarantee wash silks in garments of this price and that the pongee in Miss R.'s blouse was as good as could be expected at \$2.95. There are cotton blouses to be had at these low prices which launder and wear excellently, and if shoppers insist on getting silk and are not willing or able to pay for a good quality they cannot in fairness blame the manufacturer or the retailer if they do not get good service.

After some correspondence, an interview was finally arranged between the manager of the New York Waist House, Miss R. and a Tribune investigator. At the appointed time Miss R. appeared, bringing the waist. In front of it and one sleeve were covered with large green ink spots, and one cuff dangled helplessly from the sleeve. It had been laundered several times since the original complaint was made. Notwithstanding this and the fact that there was no inherent defect in the pongee—the quality being all that could be expected for the price paid—the New York Waist House, following out their policy of satisfaction, met the customer's insistent demand for a new blouse, although The Tribune investigator in no way urged the claim in view of the condition of the waist. Miss R. was allowed to choose another blouse at the same price as that paid for the now-disappointed pongee.

The Tribune does not uphold unjust claims of this kind. The policy of customer satisfaction which it has adopted and which it recommends to merchants is based upon reliable statistics, which prove that only a fraction of one per cent of all shoppers make unreasonable requests for refunds. If there were many customers so unreasonable as Miss R., even the well disposed merchant would ultimately refuse to listen to claims of any kind, and the day would doubtless come when there would be pasted over the door of the empty Adjustment Bureau a large sign bearing the legend: "Buyers, keepers; losers, weepers."

"HOW does this strike you as a guarantee?" writes a lady from Fordham. It is printed on the back of a grocery sales slip and reads:

We guarantee weight, quality, purity. Money will be refunded promptly at any time. Even after using part of the contents, if found unsatisfactory, bring it back and we will be pleased to return your money.

METROPOLITAN STORES, INC.

The Metropolitan Stores, Inc., advertise that they carry "nothing loose, open or in bulk; everything in bottles, cans, packages." We find their guarantee as air-tight and dust-proof as their merchandise. And of course there's no reason why sugar and spice and everything nice shouldn't be guaranteed as well as longer-lived merchandise such as gloves, lawn mowers and watches.

(The next Ad-Visor will appear Wednesday, September 12.)

King Shooting Case Reopened By Prosecutor

North Carolina Authorities Act on Murder Evidence

Find Discrepancies In Story of Death

Farmer Asserts He Heard a Second Shot Fired

SALISBURY, N. C., Sept. 8.—Hayden Clement, solicitor for the 15th Judicial District, announced today his intention of reopening the investigation into the death near Concord, on the evening of August 29, of Mrs. Maude A. King, wealthy Chicago widow. He said his first move probably would be to recall the coroner's jury, which returned a verdict of death from an accidental pistol wound.

Solicitor Clement has notified the Chicago authorities that it will be necessary for him to have a certified copy of the report on the post-mortem examination before he can begin the investigation in Concord, and said today he also desired to give the Concord authorities every opportunity to investigate new evidence which has developed there.

The evidence referred to is a statement said to have been made to an attorney by Charles S. Dry and wife, who live near the scene of the shooting. The couple are said to have declared they heard two shots, the second after the party had entered the automobile. They saw the flash of the second shot, they are said to have stated, and declared it was in the car. Testimony before the coroner was to the effect that there was only one shot.

Discrepancies in Stories

Concord was amazed today when word arrived here from Asheville concerning an interview given out by Gaston Hullock Means, who was Mrs. King's business manager and was with her at the time of the tragedy. There are several points in Means's latest explanation of the shooting at variance with his sworn testimony at the inquest. In his Asheville talk Means said the rifle and the revolver which were in the automobile on the night the trip was made by Blackwell Spring were unloaded; that the Colt automatic pistol was loaded by him after he and Mrs. King got out of the machine and started on foot for the place in which the wealthy woman met her death.

If Means now declares that the rifle was not loaded it is a declaration that does not agree with the statement of Captain W. S. Bingham, who in explaining the second shot fired near the spring said he emptied the magazine of the rifle and then pulled the trigger to make sure no shots were left. There happened to be a shot, however, and that was the second shot heard by Dry, the new witness who has suddenly injected himself into the case. When Means gave out his interview in Asheville he was not familiar with the story of Dry and the subsequent explanation of his friend Bingham.

Concord is expressing great interest today in the explanation of the killing of Mrs. King as made by Afton, better known as "Tony," Means's brother. For instance, it was Tony who a few minutes after the bringing of the body to the hospital stated that Mrs. King had been twirling the revolver around her finger when it was discharged, shooting the man to whom she says he was standing at the time. The next morning, however, Tony, his brother and Bingham told a different story.

Gaston Means's Account

Gaston Means has been emphatic in stating that Mrs. King was shot while his back was turned and he was bending over the spring. Many questions asked at the inquest remain unanswered. For instance, in his inquest testimony Gaston Means declared: "I was five feet away at the time she was shot. She was right by the tree, just where I had put the pistol. I was at the spring, standing on the rock."

The measured distance between the tree in which Means says he placed the revolver and the spring at which he says he was standing at the time he heard the pistol shot is thirty feet.

Dry's Story of Shots

There is still a discrepancy between the testimony of the members of the automobile party and Dry concerning the firing of a second shot. Dry was emphatic in declaring that after the car had proceeded from the direction of the spring a second shot rang out, and the machine then at full speed wound its way to the main road and thence to town.

The other witnesses have stated that the car stopped on the main road at which he says he was standing at the time he heard the pistol shot is thirty feet.

AMUSEMENTS

LUNA Novelties! Sensations! Free Attractions, Dancing, Biggest & best amusements place on Coney Island

MUSICAL INSTRUCTION SIGNOR FLORENCE GREEN, Renowned Vocal Instructor, at his residence, 40 Lexington Avenue. Phone 425 Murray Hill.

BROOKLYN ART INSTITUTE of Brooklyn, William C. Bridgman, Director, Music, Drama and Art, 42nd Street, 424 Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

MUSIC STUDIO TO SUBLET MUSIC STUDIO TO SUBLET, GRAND, piano, Fifth Ave., near 51st St., Telephone Madison Square 4095.

Mayor Indicted For Not Stopping E. St. Louis Riots

Grand Jury Denounces Executive and Asserts He Should Resign

Accuse Secretary Also Malfeasance in Office Is Charged; 37 Others Named in Indictment

BELLEVILLE, Ill., Sept. 8.—Mayor Fred Mollman of East St. Louis and his private secretary, Maurice Ahearn, were indicted today in connection with the grand jury inquiry into the recent race riots in East St. Louis.

Indictments were returned against thirty-seven other persons in connection with the riots, but their names were not available, as the capias for their arrest had not been issued.

The grand jury submitted a report denouncing the Mayor for his alleged dilatoriness in taking means to curb the rioters who took part in the slaying of negroes on July 2, and recommended that he be removed from office.

"Mayor Mollman," says the report, "must be judged by his actions, as proved by the evidence. If his failure to give directions to the militia, and if his failure to call upon the Sheriff, and to deputize citizens who offered their services were the result of a lack of ability or of fright, the office should be taken from him and given to an efficient person."

Labor to Expose German Plotters To Russians Here

Mass Meetings to Offset Seditious Work on the East Side

Loyal labor yesterday began a drive on the East Side to line up for the government the Russian element in which the pacifists and pro-German propagandists have been most successful.

The first move is in the form of a warning that Russian liberty is in danger because of the activities of hired traitors in the United States.

This declaration, printed in Yiddish as well as in English, will be circulated this week and will be followed by a series of meetings. The first is a mass meeting next Saturday night in Madison Square Garden, where James Duncan, the labor member, and Charles Edward Russell, the Socialist member of the Root Mission to Russia, will tell of conditions as they found them.

Appeal by Labor

The appeal, headed "Down With the Traitors," is issued by the American Alliance for Labor and Democracy to loyal labor, is as follows:

"The Russian revolution is in danger. The Kaiser's hopes to again enthroned in Russia are brilliant. From the German point of view, the cause of this upheaval rests with the hired traitors in America—traitors hired and paid for with the money of the Russian government. These traitors have betrayed the idea that American labor is against war and for a separate peace in Russia."

"Russian labor thought it would the voice of American labor and initiated a counter-revolution. The Russian divisions and regiments that have abandoned the field of battle did so because of the reports that Russian labor was not in America. This must cease. The masks of these traitors must be stripped from their faces. For this purpose a reception will be given to Charles Edward Russell and James Duncan, members of the recent mission to Russia. They will report to the American people on the conditions caused in Russia by the pernicious work perpetrated in America by these traitors."

Meeting Saturday Night

"This reception," followed by a mass meeting, will take place in Madison Square Garden on Saturday night, September 15. The speakers, Samuel Gompers, William Z. Foster, Secretary of Labor, and Stephen S. Wise, of the Free Synagogue, are best qualified to speak of the sentiment of the American labor movement. They will give voice to that sentiment to the disgust and loathing of the wily machinations of the Kaiser's tools, at the same of loyalty which actuates every true American in contemplating the debacle of Europe."

"The malicious falsehoods spread by the so-called People's and Workers' Councils will be nailed to the mast. The insinuations against the American labor movement will be assailed by labor's only spokesmen."

American labor is loyal to the needs of the nation, loyal to its war purposes in aiming a deathblow at Kaiserism and Prussianism—loyal to the Allies. Organized labor will seize this opportunity to learn the truth from the lips of its representatives and to express its devotion."



HOTEL BRISTOL

129-135 West 48th St.

The High Cost of Living problem has been solved for many families by the opening of our NEW HOTEL on 48th St.

AMERICAN PLAN

Room and Bath for two persons, \$40 to \$50 per week.

Sitting Room, Bedroom and Bath, Two persons, \$45 to \$50 per week.

Three persons, \$50 to \$75 per week.

T. ELLIOTT TOLSON.

MONTICELLO

55-57 WEST 64TH ST., N.Y.

Between Broadway and Central Park, Stations of 1st and Subway at 64th St.

A Quiet Family Hotel

TUB and SHOWER BATHS WITH ALL ROOMS

SINGLE ROOMS

Connecting with the 1st and 2nd Bldg. \$15.00 Day; \$9 & \$10 Weekly

LARGE ROOM

Private Bath, 1 or 2 Persons, \$12.50 Day; \$14 to \$16 Weekly

TWO-ROOM SUITE

Private Bath, 1 or 2 Persons, \$15 & \$16 Day; \$18 to \$21 Weekly

PARLOR AND 2 BEDROOMS

Private Bath for 2 or 3 Persons, \$15 Up; \$20 Weekly

RESTAURANT

A la Carte, Table d'Hôte, or from October 1, Weekly Menu. Phone Columbia 1290. J. A. JEPSON.

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Fire Record

A. M. 12-25—3314 Broadway, Elizabeth Smith, slight fire, \$100.00.

1-25—110 E. 10th St., Adam Perry, slight fire, \$100.00.

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HEARN

Fourteenth Street West of Fifth Avenue

16th SEMI-ANNUAL DRESSMAKERS' SALE

OPEN TO ALL

Sale Prices on Dress Fabrics and Sewing Necessities

The Following for Both Monday and Tuesday:

Silks of the Season Specially Reduced

For Dressmakers' Sale

39-inch Crepe de Chine—Full crepe effects in all this season's light and dark colors—our reg. \$1.25.....Sale .95

Yard-wide Black Taffeta—soft finish—full lustre—durable quality—our reg. \$1.47.....Sale 1.04